

Quentin Quasar and the Cosmic Tassel

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OPENING CREDITS,  
TITLES, MUSIC.

FADE IN FROM BLACK

EXT. - BETA UNDULATUS SWAMP - DAY

Ancient alien ruins stand in the swamp. There is sufficient remaining flooring that action-packed combat can ensue without anyone falling into the muddy water. The corpse of N'mscabula, a bat-winged alien, lies face-down in the water.

On the scene is Quentin Quasar, Supreme Space Jockey. This hero tries to reform dictators. Dressed in a battered leather flight jacket with moon boots, Quentin has a long face, a ponytail and a rather sizable schnozz. His pistol holster is empty, but he carries a mace and chain.

Also present is Lagomorph, Master of the Dark Nebula. He seeks to rule the galaxy with an iron fist, when he gets around to it. His most striking feature is a silver, bucket-shaped helmet with a crude cruciform vision slit carved into it (Templar-style). The helmet is adorned with a red tassel. Lagomorph is very tall, and wears a cape. He carries a long-handled battleaxe, and wears knee-high leather boots.

Quentin Quasar and Lagomorph charge at each other. Lagomorph swings his battle axe. Quentin dodges. Quentin swings his mace and chain. Lagomorph catches the chain with the haft of his axe.

NARRATOR:

It has been six years since the  
clash between Quentin Quasar and  
his arch-nemesis, Lagomorph, on the  
treacherous surface of Beta  
Undulatus.

EXT.: BETA UNDULATUS CRASH SITE

In a clearing near a brush-choked ravine, the mangled wreckage of Quentin's ship, the Space Swine, lies next to Lagomorph's damaged ship, the NightWing. The Space Swine is a clunky, broad-nosed garbage scow. The NightWing is a sleek, art deco predator.

Quentin and Lagomorph, by creative use of wooden scaffolds, attach the front half of the Space Swine to the rear half of the NightWing, and weld them together.

NARRATOR:

Six years since they were forced to pool their resources to escape that hellhole of a planet. On that fateful day, they became joint owners of a spaceship, the Night Swine.

INT. - CONCERT HALL

Quentin is singing, and Lagomorph playing the electric guitar, in a five-piece rock band. The frame freezes and turns into a photograph, which rips in half.

NARRATOR: (CONT'D)

Six years since the formation of the greatest Nova Rock band in the history of the universe. The band stayed together for five weeks until its stellar career was all-too-prematurely brought up short by,

EXT.: NUCLEAR TESTING GROUND

A fake town is destroyed by a nuclear explosion.

NARRATOR: (CONT'D)

all too true, allegations that they staged fake novas with high yield nuclear devices.

EXT.: Space

THE NIGHTSWINE flies through space. The ship stalls out. After a few seconds, it lurches forward, leaving loose parts spinning in space.

NARRATOR: (CONT'D)

The other band members pursued lucrative careers as spokesmen for used spacecraft dealerships, leaving Quentin Quasar, supreme space jockey, to wander the universe in the company of Lagomorph, Master of the Dark Nebula.

FADE TO BLACK

FADE IN FROM BLACK

INT: The Nightswine's control room.

The interior of the ship was originally a beautiful, organically-shaped technological masterpiece of interior decorating. Now, panels are open, with wires and retrofitted and jury-rigged components spilling out all over. Many parts of the ship have been replaced with industrial-styled pieces. There is a sliding door (a la Star Trek) in the rear, and two chairs facing the controls in the front.

Quentin is sitting at the controls. Lagomorph enters and sits down.

Quentin looks much as he did during the opening montage, but Lagomorph has put on some weight; he is rather stout. He is also wearing wing-tips and suit pants instead of the more rugged gear of his youth.

QUENTIN:

Morning.

LAGOMORPH:

Good morning to you, Quasar. What sort of agenda of mayhem and destruction do we have planned for today?

QUENTIN:

(Rolls eyes)

Well, there is an oppressive dictatorship colonizing and plundering the natural resources of scores of planets over in the Beta Cahuihui quadrant. I'm thinking we should overthrow them and institute a lavish campaign of spicy democratic reforms.

LAGOMORPH:

Bah! Let's just insinuate ourselves into their hierarchy, will ourselves to power, and use those resources to fuel a war machine to Conquer the Universe!

Lagomorph's tassel flops in front of his face, and he reaches up and flips it back where it belongs.

Quentin Stares at Lagomorph for a few beats, then looks around with a grimace. He then gets up and walks over to the coffee machine. He pours himself some black coffee from a nearby carafe and begins to sip appreciatively.

Lagomorph leans back in his chair and crosses his legs and arms.

LAGOMORPH: (CONT'D)  
You haven't mentioned my new helmet  
yet.

Shot from Lagomorph's POV, with masking in the shape of the slit in Lagomorph's helmet. Quentin glances at camera, then does a double-take.

Low shot of Quentin.

QUENTIN:  
It looks the same as the old one.

Lagomorph rushes up to Quentin.

LAGOMORPH:  
It's a completely different design,  
you philistine!

QUENTIN:  
Well I completely refitted the ship  
from stem to stern. And I made  
coffee.

Close-up of Lagomorph, Quentin's POV. A spiral emits from Lagomorph's forehead.

LAGOMORPH:  
You are falling under my power...

QUENTIN:  
I am falling under your power.

LAGOMORPH:  
You cannot resist...

QUENTIN:  
I cannot resist.

LAGOMORPH:  
You will set course for the Adamant  
system... and turn the strategic  
weapon systems of this craft  
against the people there... until  
they bow to ME as their overlord!

Quentin begins pushing buttons on the ship's controls.

QUENTIN:  
I will set course... turn weapons  
against them... bow to you...

Quentin looks up, sharply.

QUENTIN: (CONT'D)  
 What?!? Are you trying to  
 hypnotize me?

Quentin hops up from his chair, assumes a gunfighter's crouch, draws his ray-gun and blasts Lagomorph where he stands. LAGOMORPH pushes a button on the little box on his chest. A force field bubble around him blocks the ray-gun blast.

LAGOMORPH:  
 Muh huh huh huh huh!

Quentin shakes his fist at Lagomorph.

QUENTIN:  
 I'll catch you without that force  
 field one of these days, you  
 verminous snake!

LAGOMORPH:  
 You'll never outwit me, you naïve  
 do-gooder. Abandon your  
 egalitarian ideals, for they will  
 avail you naught!

QUENTIN:  
 The only purpose for which power  
 can be rightfully exercised over  
 any member of a civilized  
 community, against his will, is to  
 prevent harm to others. His own  
 good, either physical or moral, is  
 not sufficient warrant.

Low shot, over Quentin's shoulder. Lagomorph looms.

LAGOMORPH:  
 What is good? Whatever augments  
 the feeling of power, the will to  
 power, power itself, in man.

Lagomorph lurches forward, getting in Quentin's face.

LAGOMORPH: (CONT'D)  
 What is evil? Whatever springs  
 from weakness. What is-

Lagomorph does a goofy little dance.

LAGOMORPH: (CONT'D)  
 -happiness?

Low shot of Lagomorph.

LAGOMORPH: (CONT'D)  
The feeling that power increases,  
that resistance is overcome.

Lagomorph lays his head on his hands, as if to sleep.

LAGOMORPH: (CONT'D)  
Not contentment, but-

Lagomorph leans and lurches forward again.

LAGOMORPH: (CONT'D)  
-more power!

Quentin flinches back, but quickly recovers, and looks bored.

LAGOMORPH: (CONT'D)  
Not peace at any price, but war;  
not virtue, but efficiency.

Lagomorph, in his excitement, eventually collapses into a fetal position on the floor.

LAGOMORPH: (CONT'D)  
The weak and the botched shall  
perish, and one should help them do  
it.

QUENTIN:  
Well, philosophy aside, this ship  
isn't going to go very much farther  
unless we refuel, and I blew the  
last of our starbucks on those  
chromium-plated power converters  
I'd been eyeing.

Lagomorph gets up and diddles with a computer.

LAGOMORPH:  
Well, there's a major branch of the  
Pan-Galactic Bank within five  
parsecs of here.

QUENTIN:  
I don't have an account with Pan-  
Galactic, and if I did, it would be  
empty.

LAGOMORPH:  
(Impatiently)  
We could rob it.

QUENTIN:

That sounds unnecessarily complicated. Besides, we shouldn't steal other people's money!

LAGOMORPH:

Ohhh, c'mon! That money is just sitting there accruing interest. We would be injecting it back into the economy where it belongs, and think of how entertaining it would be for the masses, whom you claim to cherish so-

Lagomorph makes a "movie screen" shape with his fingers.

LAGOMORPH: (CONT'D)

-if news of a major bank robbery were broadcast into their homes.

QUENTIN:

Are you suggesting that there's a dearth of terrifying mayhem on the news? No, we need to get good, honest jobs, preferably ones that pay for travel expenses.

Extreme low shot of Lagomorph.

LAGOMORPH:

Jobs?!? Lagomorph, Master of the Dark Nebula, bows to NO man!

Close-up of Lagomorph. Lagomorph looks at camera.

LAGOMORPH: (CONT'D)

Especially not to middle management.

Quentin brings up a computer display. Shot should parody the one where Han Solo is looking up Lando's address in The Empire Strikes Back.

LAGOMORPH: (CONT'D)

What are you reading?

QUENTIN:

Job listings. Here's a good one: "Wealth, fame and power can be yours."

LAGOMORPH:  
 (brightly)  
 That sounds interesting, actually.  
 What is it?

Quentin look up at Lagomorph.

QUENTIN:  
 "Interstellar Pizza Delivery."

EXT.: SPACE: THE NIGHTSWINE.

The spaceship, now festooned with "Pizza Pope" logos and flashing red lights, cruises through space. The shot tightens in on the forward area of the ship, where the control room is located.

NARRATOR (V/O):  
 And so, Quentin and Lagomorph join the noble fraternity of pizza delivery boys. The Nightswine is emblazoned with insignia which give her right-of-way over any other traffic, especially emergency vehicles, for The Pizza Must Be On Time.

QUENTIN (V/O):  
 Put your cap on.

LAGOMORPH (V/O):  
 I will not wear that hat. It is beneath my dignity.

INT.: THE NIGHTSWINE

Quentin and Lagomorph are seated at the controls. Quentin wears a cap with the "Pizza Pope" logo on it. An insulated pizza carrier sits between them on the control panel.

QUENTIN:  
 You'll wear a silver bucket on your head, but you won't wear a cap? This is your uniform, man! Think of the children!

LAGOMORPH:  
 I'll have you know that this is the traditional helmet of the Master of the Dark Nebula, and I wont have it made light of!

QUENTIN:

Well, you better hope that Whittemore doesn't see you without your cap on, is all I'm saying.

LAGOMORPH:

Whittemore! That spineless, insignificant little worm! He may have the power to fire me now, but soon I'll make him crawl. I'll torture him until he begs for death... and I'll refuse him..

QUENTIN:

Sure. Where's this pie supposed to go, anyway?

Lagomorph looks at pizza box.

LAGOMORPH:

1201 Bryllkhuzzuh Street, Alpha City, Omega Telephonepolius, Gaiman sector.

Quentin sets course for the planet in question.

EXT.: THE NIGHTSWINE.

Pizza pirate ships appear and engage Our Heroes in a space dogfight.

INT.: THE NIGHTSWINE

PIRATE:

(via radio)

Surrender your pizza or be destroyed.

QUENTIN:

Klono's gadolinium gizzard and curving carballoy claws! Pizza Pirates!

LAGOMORPH:

These simpleminded fools know not with whom they are dealing. I will deliver unto them the fiery destruction that is their doom!

A space battle takes place.

(Notes: These lines should be inserted where appropriate during the melee.)

QUENTIN:

Yahoo!

LAGOMORPH:

I will crush you as I would the  
smallest insect!

QUENTIN:

Stay on target...

LAGOMORPH:

They're getting too close, Quasar...

QUENTIN:

Engaging phyllilliam transduce-spon-  
whapulatur.

QUENTIN: (CONT'D)

Deflector shields: 75%.

LAGOMORPH:

Your destiny lies in oblivion,  
Pizza Pirate!

QUENTIN:

Our shields are down; they're  
targeting our weapon systems.

LAGOMORPH:

Gah! Prepare the Glory Device.  
Perhaps we can take them down with  
us.

QUENTIN:

No. Not yet. They're moving in to  
board us. We may still have a  
chance...

EXT.: SPACE

The Pizza Pirates' ship moves close and attaches itself to  
the Nightswine.

INT.: THE NIGHTSWINE

Quentin and Lagomorph stand up. Their movements are swift  
and economical as they gird themselves for battle. Quentin  
checks the charge of his raygun while Lagomorph snatches up  
his battle axe from the corner where it is leaning.

QUENTIN:

They're breaking down the hatch!  
Get ready.

Lagomorph activates his personal force field.

LAGOMORPH:

They'll have a lot of trouble  
harming me through my force field.  
I'm afraid you're doomed, "old  
friend."

QUENTIN:

Pah! After my valiant death,  
you'll no doubt be captured and  
suffer humiliating tortures.

LAGOMORPH:

Hmmm.. you may have a point. Much  
as I prefer to send my minions to  
the forefront of the fight-

QUENTIN:

How many times do I have to tell  
you, I'm not your minion!

LAGOMORPH:

I guess I'll have to stand in  
front.

Quentin's jaw drops.

LAGOMORPH: (CONT'D)

Needs must drive, wot? If you get  
killed, there'll be no one to  
maintain the ship! I'm certainly  
not going to dirty my hands with  
such menial work. I'll stand in  
front, protecting you with my  
forcefield. You fire your ray-gun  
over my shoulder.

QUENTIN:

Right!

The Pizza Pirates burst in. They are the scurviest lot of  
pie thieves this side of Andromeda. Several of the alien  
buccaneers sport peg-legs and eye patches (in one notable  
case, THREE eye patches!) and the captain has an extra-large,  
extra-sharp pizza-cutter in place of his left hand. The  
pizza-cutter has an electric motor, turning into a mechanical  
prosthesis of culinary death and destruction.

Quentin and Lagomorph enact their plan, driving the pirates  
back into their own ship. Lagomorph's force field runs out  
of power, and his tassel is destroyed in the melee.  
Eventually, the pirates are all destroyed.

INT.: PIZZA PIRATES' SHIP

The interior of the pizza pirates' ship is dark, with strobe lights and dry ice. Absurd quantities of old pizza boxes and uneaten pizza crusts are piled up all over.

Quentin and Lagomorph finish off the last of the pirates, and find Roger Ibb tied to a chair.

Roger Ibb is a careworn, rather narrow-chested man wearing coveralls. This janitor can't possibly avert disaster.

QUENTIN:

What's this, a captive?

Quentin begins untying Ibb.

LAGOMORPH:

Hah! He's our captive now! Now, what would be best. Ransom him for untold riches? Too common. Oh, I know. We'll replace his frontal lobes with a computer, and program him to obey me without question! He could be my cyborg enforcer!

QUENTIN:

None of that, Lagomorph. This man's had enough captivity. We're rescuing him.

IBB:

Besides, I'm too tired to enforce much of anything. The name's Ibb, Roger Ibb.

QUENTIN:

I am Quentin Quasar, Supreme Space Jockey.

LAGOMORPH:

Lagomorph! Master... of the Dark Nebula!

Quentin checks his watch.

QUENTIN:

The pizza! We're almost late with our delivery!

Lagomorph notices a tassel hanging on the wall and takes it, attaching it to his helmet.

Ibb starts and stares intently at Lagomorph during this transaction. Then, all three jog back to the Nightswine.

EXT.: PLANET OMEGA TELEPHONEPOLIUS - EVENING

The landing site is a grassy area of rolling hills with scattered trees.

The Nightswine lands on Omega Telephonepolius. While making the delivery on foot:

QUENTIN:

I always enjoy vanquishing insidious foes before making a delivery, it makes the job that much more interesting.

LAGOMORPH:

Bah! Your bedazzlement with such small stuff reveals the pettiness of your ambitions. Your skills would more fruitfully be applied to the task of universal domination.

QUENTIN:

Oh come on, those iniquitous gimmicks rarely work, and when they do, it all ends in tears.

LAGOMORPH:

Tears for the weak. Power for the mighty!

EXT.: OLD MAN'S HOUSE - EVENING.

A small and ugly house.

QUENTIN:

Here it is. 1201 Bryllkhuzzuh Street.

Lagomorph produces a bullhorn from beneath his cape and shouts into it.

LAGOMORPH:

Come out with your hands where we can see them! We have your pizza, so no false moves.

QUENTIN:

Uhh... are you sure that's really necessary? I mean, they did order the pizza from us.

Lagomorph puts the bullhorn away.

LAGOMORPH:

I will not suffer another incident  
of Nonpayment of Tip!

QUENTIN:

Well, in some places, the nicer you  
are, the bigger the tip.

Lagomorph waves a dismissive hand at Quentin.

Old man shuffles out the front door.

OLD MAN:

Eh... bout time you got here! Ga-  
shangit cha-durn idjits! I been  
waitin' thirty year for that there  
pizza!

LAGOMORPH:

You fool, your old age has not  
brought you wisdom, only folly. By  
my reckoning, this pizza has only  
been out of the oven for twenty-  
seven minutes.

QUENTIN:

Well, the hyperdrive on the  
Nightswine warps the space time  
continuum in such a way that it is  
possible to end up several decades  
off course if the relativity  
compensator isn't aligned properly.  
When the pizza pirates attacked us,  
we did take a hit to the starboard  
engine bulkhead near where the  
compensator is located.

LAGOMORPH:

You incompetent dabbler, how could  
you have failed to notice that a  
vital ship's system had been  
damaged?

QUENTIN:

The computer didn't detect it!

OLD MAN:

Y'all had better come in.

LAGOMORPH:

All right, but no tricks! I warn you!

QUENTIN rolls his eyes.

INT.: OLD MAN'S HOUSE.

The living room is choked with dustcatchers and is lit by a single 20 watt lamp (sans lampshade).

The three men enter through the front door.

LAGOMORPH:

Pay us for this pizza or I'll disintegrate you where you stand, but first you will witness the slow and excruciating torture of each of your family members and pets.

QUENTIN:

That'll be eight starbucks, please.

Old Man hands over the cash and greedily opens the pizza box, sniffing hungrily at the rising steam.

OLD MAN:

Mighty fine pizza. Mighty fine.

Quentin and Lagomorph exit.

EXT.: THE NIGHTSWINE - EVENING.

Quentin and Lagomorph enter the Nightswine.

INT.: THE NIGHTSWINE CONTROL ROOM

Ibb and Quentin are sitting in the control room.

IBB:

Thanks for rescuing me.

QUENTIN:

Oh, all in a day's work for Quentin Quasar, Supreme Space Jockey. Think nothing of it. Why did those buccaneers capture you, anyway?

IBB:

Those pirates were up to no good. You see, that tassel your, uh, friend is wearing is no ordinary ornament. It's the Cosmic Tassel!

QUENTIN:  
The Cosmic Tassel?!?

IBB:  
The Cosmic Tassel.

QUENTIN:  
What are you talking about?

IBB:  
Well, it all began three weeks ago..

COMMENCE  
FLASHBACK:

IBB: (V.O.)  
I was working as a janitor at the EvilPie Corp. While cleaning outside of the conference room, I overheard the details of a sinister plot.

INT.: EVILPIE CORP'S BOARD ROOM

A huge table dominates the wood-paneled room. Adorning the wall is a rather fancy gilded version of the EvilPie Corp's logo: a pizza with the pepperoni arranged in the shape of a pentagram. A typical white-jacketed scientist and a balding, portly businessman, the EvilPie Corp's president, about 40 years old, confer within. The president is a typical caricature of a bloated plutocrat, lacking on a monocle and top-hat. The scientist has a red tassel, fancier than Lagomorph's. The door is ajar.

SCIENTIST:  
The Cosmic Tassel, when used in conjunction with the nano-robots, will allow the wearer to control the mind and body of any who are infested with the nano-robots.

PRESIDENT:  
Each pizza produced by the EvilPie Corp will have a special ingredient: nano-robots!

IBB:  
Vile fiends. You'll never get away with this!

Ibb leaps into the room, smashes the scientist's head with his broom handle, smashes the computer with his broom-handle, grabs the Cosmic Tassel, and runs away like a thief with his pants on fire.

PRESIDENT:  
Who? What? Guards!!! Seize him!

SCIENTIST:  
Wha' hopen?

PRESIDENT:  
Some fool has absconded with the Tassel! It will be recovered, but if it cannot be, surely it can be replicated, no?

SCIENTIST:  
Who am I? What is this place?  
Tassel? What are you talking about?

PRESIDENT:  
Curses! Amnesia! We MUST recover that tassel, at all costs!

EXT.: EVILPIE CORP'S HEADQUARTERS - DAY:

The EvilPie Corp's headquarters building is, unsurprisingly, a huge stainless steel and glass pile intended to diminish the human spirit.

Ibb runs away from building, with guards in close pursuit.

INT.: THE NIGHTSWINE'S CONTROL ROOM:

Quentin and Ibb are sitting in the control chairs as Ibb relates his tale. Ibb is really intense, while Quentin has adopted a rather casual, relaxed attitude.

IBB:  
I managed to stow away aboard a ship, but the Pizza Pirates boarded us, took the Cosmic Tassel, and captured me. Turns out they've been hired by the EvilPie Corp.

QUENTIN:  
Why did the Pizza Pirates attack us, then?

IBB:

They're Pizza Pirates, no? You're pizza delivery boys, right? It's just in their nature.

Lagomorph steps out from behind the doorframe.

LAGOMORPH:

This information will prove to be most useful to me, Mr. Ibb. When I become the ruler of the entire galaxy, you will be richly rewarded.

IBB:

No! You must destroy that tassel.

LAGOMORPH:

MuhuhuhhaHAH!

Ibb clutches his head in annoyance and heads into another room of the ship.

QUENTIN:

He's right, you know. That much power in the hands of one individual is just asking for abuse.

LAGOMORPH:

Don't worry, Quasar, under my rule, peace and order will reign supreme throughout the galaxy.

QUENTIN:

You know, I've never had an EvilPie pizza in my life.

LAGOMORPH:

I warn you, don't interfere with my plans. Coupled with my already prodigious psychic powers I can use this Tassel to far greater effect than any mere Pizza Corporation executive. A veritable utopia of efficiency will come about due to my efforts.

QUENTIN:

Well, let me see what's wrong with the hyperdrive, or everyone will die of old age before you can rule over them.

Quentin exits.

INT.: NIGHTSWINE'S ENGINE ROOM

There is no pretense toward interior decorating here. Everything is 100% functional in its design. Cables as fat as a man's leg, fuses the size of oil drums, ductwork hanging below head-level, and rivets, lots of rivets, are found in abundance here.

Quentin monkeys with the engine.

QUENTIN:

There's something interfering with the relativity compensator.

Quentin exits.

EXT.: THE NIGHTSWINE, STILL UPON THE SURFACE OF PLANET OMEGA TELEPHONEPOLIUS - NIGHT

Quentin finds a small gadget attached to the hull of the ship.

INT.: THE NIGHTSWINE'S CONTROL ROOM

Lagomorph is sitting at one of the control chairs, playing with one of those ball and cup games. He tries several times to get the ball in the cup, failing each time. As the door hisses open, he quickly hides the game under his cape. Quentin enters, holding the gadget and examining it from all angles.

QUENTIN:

Look at this. A tracking device was attached to our hull! The Pizza Pirates must have put it there during the dogfight. There may be reinforcements coming.

Lagomorph straightens up.

LAGOMORPH:

Then we must gird ourselves for battle.

QUENTIN:

Strap in and prepare for liftoff.

They take off.

EXT.: THE NIGHTSWINE - NIGHT

The ship blasts off from Omega Telephonepolius and flies into space.

QUENTIN:

Sensors detect a capital ship approaching from sector seven.

LAGOMORPH:

Yes, it is the Evilpie Corp's mega-frigate. They undoubtedly wish to recover the Cosmic Tassel of ultimate power. The fools know not the depths of my commitment to ambition and glory. Engage the hyperdrive!

QUENTIN:

They have us in a tractor beam. We can't go to light speed!

EXT.: THE NIGHTSWINE:

A space battle of epic proportions ensues. The NightSwine is eventually drawn into the cavernous cargo hold of the corporate behemoth.

INT.: MEGA-FRIGATE'S BRIG

The walls, floor and ceiling are bare metal. There is a toilet and a sink. There are four hard beds which can retract into the wall. The room is lit by overhead fluorescent lights behind frosted Plexiglas. There is an air vent high up on one wall.

Quentin, Lagomorph, and Ibb are slumped in a cell. Lagomorph no longer wears the Cosmic Tassel. All of their weapons have been confiscated, too. They stare at each other for a few seconds.

Quentin gets up and stretches.

QUENTIN:

Well, I've had about enough of this. Time to get out of here.

LAGOMORPH:

Quentin, Quentin, Quentin. We're locked up in a cell, in case you hadn't noticed.

QUENTIN:

Correction: YOU'RE locked up in a cell. I can walk out of here any time I want to.

Quentin slides open a hidden compartment in his boot heel and removes a small metal multi-tool. Lagomorph and Ibb stare in surprise. Quentin leaps up to the air vent and has it pried open in a trice. It's a tight fit, but he wriggles in.

LAGOMORPH:

Quasar! I can't fit in that duct!

INT.: AIR DUCT

Only Quentin's face and arms are visible as he squirms through the air duct. The duct is composed of aluminum, and dust bunnies flee from Quentin's laborious approach.

QUENTIN:

I'll spring you guys as soon as I get a chance!

Quentin crawls until he reaches a junction, and turns. He reaches another grate, and looks through. A robot can be seen, standing guard in the hallway below.

INT.: MEGA-FRIGATE'S HALLWAY

The hallway is gray-painted metal, typical of 21st century naval vessels.

The robot, with protuberant camera eyes, a backpack transmitter, and a ray-gun rifle, stands guard outside a door. The vent grill pops off and lands at the robot's feet. The robot looks down at it, its camera eyes whirring as they focus on the grill.

Quentin leaps out of the air duct and rips the transmitter off the robot's back in a shower of sparks. The robot turns, and Quentin smashes its camera lenses with a chop of his hand. The robot's head spins around a couple of times before it slumps in defeat. Quentin grabs its rifle and kicks it over.

INT.: MEGA-FRIGATE'S READY ROOM

The ready-room is well-appointed, with leather-covered chairs, mahogany table, humidior, and nice dim lighting.

The President of the EvilPie Corp, now thirty years older than in his previous appearance, sits in a chair and holds the Cosmic Tassel.

He stares at it, dangling it in front of his eyes. There is a pizza delivery boy wearing an EvilPie uniform, standing motionless nearby.

PRESIDENT:

Such a tiny thing... with the power  
to enslave the universe.

(to Boy) )

You there, stand on your head.

The Tassel begins to shimmer and emit a spiral (much as Lagomorph emitted when he tried to hypnotize Quentin earlier). The Boy quickly stands on his head.

PRESIDENT: (CONT'D)

Give me your wallet.

The Boy reaches into his pocket and extends his wallet to the President. The President takes it.

PRESIDENT: (CONT'D)

Excellent, now to test it on the  
whole ship.

The President screws up his face in concentration. The Tassel's shimmering and spiraling increases.

PRESIDENT: (CONT'D)

Come to the ready room. Come to  
the ready room. Come to the ready  
room.

INT.: MEGA-FRIGATE: VARIOUS ROOMS

A montage of different EvilPie employees dropping what they are doing and heading screen left.

INT.: MEGA-FRIGATE'S HALLWAY

Quentin sneaks up behind a couple of EvilPie employees and watches as they get a glazed expression on their faces and head off toward the ready room. Quentin follows at a safe distance.

INT.: MEGA-FRIGATE'S READY ROOM

The President looks pleased as his slack-jawed employees start shuffling in through the door.

PRESIDENT:

Excellent. It works on a large  
scale. Stop walking, everyone!  
Now I will try to influence some  
person outside of the ship.

The President turns on a TV set. The news is on, and the anchorman is announcing things. The tassel again glows and throws off spirals.

ANCHORMAN:

Peace talks between the Betel-guesians and the Telephonepolians broke down today when a Betel-guesian snubfighter was shot down over Telephonepolian airspace.

PRESIDENT:

(over Anchorman)

Pick your nose. Pick your nose.  
Pick your nose. Damn! He must not have any of the nano-bots infesting him!

The president changes the channel to a talk show. A host and four guests sit in chairs.

HOST:

Now, some would argue that Nova Rock died when the Atom Bomb Scandal broke. What do you think-

PRESIDENT:

(over Host)

Pick your nose. Pick your nose.  
It worked!

The Host breaks off mid-sentence and starts picking his nose.

Quentin bursts into the room and quickly takes in the situation

QUENTIN:

Are you making that man pick his nose?

PRESIDENT:

Um, maybe?

Quentin gives the President a contemptuous and disgusted look.

PRESIDENT: (CONT'D)

Never mind that. Down on your knees!

Quentin casually checks to see if his fingernails are looking neat.

PRESIDENT: (CONT'D)  
Hmmm.. No nanobots in you, either.  
No matter. Seize him!

The employees spring into action, rushing at Quentin. Quentin lays about himself with the butt of his rifle, felling foe after foe and advancing toward the President.

The President recoils and Quentin fells him with a mighty blow from his fist. Quentin snatches up the Cosmic Tassel and whirls around. He concentrates, and the tassel begins sparkling 'n spiraling.

QUENTIN:  
Let me pass. Let me pass.

The goons stand aside, clearing a path. Quentin heads for the exit.

INT.: MEGA-FRIGATE HALLWAY

Quentin nearly collides with Lagomorph on the way out of the door.

QUENTIN:  
How did you get out of that cell?

LAGOMORPH:  
Oh, I have my ways.

QUENTIN:  
Uh huh. No, really, how did you escape?

LAGOMORPH:  
No, really. I'm not going to tell you.

Lagomorph notices the Tassel.

LAGOMORPH: (CONT'D)  
Ah! I see you've recovered the Tassel. Well done, well done.

QUENTIN:  
Ah, it was nothing.

LAGOMORPH:  
It was not nothing. You did a great job in there. These are for you.

Lagomorph hands Quentin a pair of fine leather gloves. Quentin tries them on.

QUENTIN:

Wow, these are really nice! What's the occasion?

LAGOMORPH:

You know my policy: Punish failure, reward success. It's the most efficient way of getting the most out of your subordinates.

Quentin jerkily removes the gloves and extends them to Lagomorph.

QUENTIN:

You know? Keep them. I should have known you'd have some sort of fascistic ulterior motive.

As Lagomorph reaches for the gloves with one hand, he snatches the Tassel from Quentin with the other.

LAGOMORPH:

I'll take that, thank you very much!

QUENTIN:

Wha-?

Lagomorph scampers off. Quentin growls and sprints after him. Roger Ibb is coming up in the other direction, but quickly reverses, following after Quentin.

QUENTIN: (CONT'D)

Let's get out of here.

LAGOMORPH:

Agreed. It's time to get proactive about ruling the galaxy.

INT.: THE NIGHTSWINE'S CONTROL ROOM

The Lagomorph, Quentin and Ibb enter the room.

IBB:

Listen you creep! You need to give up that Tassel!

Ibb reaches for the Tassel, but is knocked back by Lagomorph's force field.

IBB: (CONT'D)

Arrgh!

LAGOMORPH:

I need do nothing of the sort!  
I'll be in my quarters, plotting.

IBB:

No!

QUENTIN:

Let him go. There's no talking to  
him when he's in this sort of mood.  
Trust me.

EXT.: SPACE

The Nightswine flies out of the Mega-Frigate's landing bay  
and warps into hyperspace.

INT.: LAGOMORPH'S ROOM

Lagomorph sprawls upon a skull-encrusted throne, holding the  
Cosmic Tassel in one hand, a TV remote control in the other.  
The rather small room is crammed with a bed, a TV, and a desk  
(covered with papers). Musty tomes lie in untidy piles.

Lagomorph flips on the TV and tunes it to a news station  
(it's the sportscaster talking). He stares at the screen,  
and the Tassel begins its customary glowing.

SPORTSCASTER:

And the Rigel League Frungy  
championship series saw a major  
upset today as the Pik beat the  
Zoq, 71-2! The Pik were not  
receiving favored odds in...

The sportscaster pauses and assumes a glazed expression.

SPORTSCASTER: (CONT'D)

This just in. People of the Milky  
Way Galaxy. This is an  
announcement from your new  
overlord, Lagomorph! Master! Of  
the Dark Nebula!

INT.: THE NIGHTSWINE'S CONTROL ROOM

Quentin and Ibb sit in the control seats, watching the same  
sportscast on the monitor.

SPORTSCASTER:

Soon the civilized worlds of the galaxy will submit to my will. The society of the iron fist will rule. Those who please me will be richly rewarded. Failure will be punished. I don't expect you to bow to me based on my words. Soon, my actions will speak volumes! I return now to the fetid darkness. Heed my commands!

Quentin and Ibb look at each other significantly. The Sportscaster shakes his head in bewilderment and looks around.

SPORTSCASTER: (CONT'D)

That was, uh. That was... Well, quit a lot of people lost money on bets on the, uh, Zoq... team. Back to you, Jaime.

Cut to Anchorman.

ANCHORMAN:

Thanks, Habib. That was an... unusual... report! We'll be back, after this.

A commercial for Zot soft drinks comes on the air, but Lagomorph turns off the TV.

LAGOMORPH:

Mmm. The civilized species of the galaxy will soon unit against me. I will need to arm myself.

Lagomorph concentrates. The tassel goes nuts as he projects his thoughts over a wide area.

LAGOMORPH: (CONT'D)

Build me a space fleet worthy of Lagomorph. Build me a space fleet worthy of Lagomorph. Build me a space fleet worthy of Lagomorph.

EXT.: ORBITAL SHIPYARD

A skeletal, box-like structure hangs in space. It is similar to the dry dock we would expect to see in a Star Trek movie.

INT.: ORBITAL SHIPYARD

Space-suited figures and little space-tugs begin assembling a mighty space cruiser.

WORKERS:  
 (via radio)  
 Build, space fleet. Build, space  
 fleet.

INT.: DINING ROOM

A dozen or so children and a few parents are gathered around a table covered with (EvilPie) pizza pies and a birthday cake.

PARTY-GOERS:  
 (singing)  
 Happy birthday to you, happy birth  
 day to you, happy..

PARTY-GOERS: (CONT'D)  
 (chanting)  
 Build, space fleet. Build, space  
 fleet.

The kids and parents file out of them room.

EXT.: SUBURBAN HOME: DAY

The party-goers stagger out into daylight and head for a tree house. Some of them have tools. They quickly dismantle the tree house and start hammering and sawing into the shape of a crude rocket ship.

PARTY-GOERS:  
 Build, space fleet. Build, space  
 fleet.

INT.: LAGOMORPH'S ROOM

Lagomorph sprawls on his throne, exhausted from his recent effort.

LAGOMORPH:  
 So tired. Just need a little shut-  
 eye. Thass it jussa liddle..

He snores.

FADE TO BLACK

FADE FROM BLACK

INT.: LAGOMORPH'S ROOM

Lagomorph awakes with a start.

LAGOMORPH:  
Huh? What time izzit? What's  
happening out there?

He turns on the TV.

ANCHORMAN:  
News flash! The galactic economy  
has crashed to a screeching halt.  
Experts state that the cause of the  
economic disruption is loss of  
productivity due to unprecedented  
levels of missed work. Habib?

The Sportscaster is building a plastic model of the USS  
Enterprise.

SPORTSCASTER:  
Build, space fleet. Build, space  
fleet.

ANCHORMAN:  
Yes, it appears that nearly sixty  
percent of the population is  
attempting to build a space fleet,  
for reason unknown. Unfortunately,  
few people are really well-trained  
in the craft of shipbuilding.  
Here's Django with a special  
report. Django?

The camera cuts to a remote feed at the orbital shipyard.

INT.: ORBITAL SHIPYARD

Django floats in space, holding a microphone (obviously just  
used as a prop in this setting). Next to him floats the  
foreman of the shipyard.

DJANGO:  
Sir, what have you witnessed  
occurring here over the last few  
hours?

FOREMAN:  
Well, you see, a lot of my men up  
and started building a space ship.  
I didn't tell 'em to, they just  
went ahead and did it.

(MORE)

FOREMAN: (CONT'D)

Then this influx of yahoos off a  
tour bus showed up.

YAHOOOS:

(b/g)

Build, space fleet. Build, space  
fleet.

FOREMAN:

They've been messing everything up.

The camera zooms in on the spaceship, under construction.  
Parts of the ship seem to be coming along fine, but sections  
of the ship appear to be made of poorly-cut plywood.

DJANGO:

There you have it, folks. Back to  
you, Jaime.

THE CAMERA CUTS BACK TO THE NEWSROOM.

INT.: NEWSROOM

ANCHORMAN:

Thanks, Django. What does this-

INT. LAGOMORPH'S ROOM:

Lagomorph turns off the TV.

LAGOMORPH:

Gah! Those fools!

Lagomorph, puts the Tassel on his helmet, leaps off of his  
throne and stomps out the door of his room.

INT. THE NIGHTSWINE'S HALLWAY

This room features the same sleek organic look as the control  
room, and isn't nearly as retrofitted with industrial junk.

Quentin and Ibb are standing guard on either side of  
Lagomorph's door. As soon as Lagomorph stomps out, they  
tackle him. Ibb holds Lagomorph down as Quentin removes the  
Tassel from Lagomorph's helmet.

LAGOMORPH:

Unhand me at once, you cretinous  
insects!

QUENTIN:

I think you've done quite enough damage with this, Lagomorph. No man should have this much power. It corrupts, you know, power?

Lagomorph struggles with Ibb as Quentin gazes speculatively at the Tassel.

QUENTIN: (CONT'D)

Well, I suppose just one more little command couldn't cause too much trouble... I have it! A little job security wouldn't hurt.

Lagomorph stops fighting with Ibb and stares intently at Quentin, waiting to see what will happen when the hero's hitherto incorruptible façade falls away. Ibb, too, stares at Quentin with an expression of dread.

Quentin concentrates, using the Cosmic Tassel. The usual fireworks ensue.

QUENTIN: (CONT'D)

EvilPies taste like garbage. Pizza Pope is the best. EvilPies taste like garbage. Pizza Pope is the best.

IBB:

No! Now the power of the Tassel's ensnared you, too!

Ibb leaps up and snatches the Tassel out of Quentin's hands. He runs down the hall and through a door.

QUENTIN:

No, wait! That's the airlock!

Quentin and Lagomorph rush after Ibb and reach the door just in time to see, through the porthole, Roger Ibb opening the opposite hatch and being blown into space.

EXT.: SPACE

Ibb explodes like a water balloon, still clutching the Cosmic Tassel.

LAGOMORPH:

Turn the ship around! We have to go back!

QUENTIN:

Right!

They run back down the hall.

INT.: NIGHTSWINE'S CONTROL ROOM

Quentin and Lagomorph rush into their seats.

QUENTIN:

I've heard that a man can survive  
without a space suit in total  
vacuum for up to thirty seconds.

LAGOMORPH:

It's already been twenty-six seconds.

Quentin frantically works the controls, but then beats his  
fists against the console.

QUENTIN:

If only I'd been a little faster!

LAGOMORPH:

What are you stopping for? The  
Tassel, Quasar, the Tassel!

QUENTIN:

Lagomorph, we were going well in  
excess of light speed when Ibb took  
his final spacewalk. We'll never  
find the Tassel. It could be  
anywhere in the universe by now.

LAGOMORPH:

Nooooooooooooo!!!

Lagomorph holds his head in his hands and weeps.

QUENTIN:

I told you these schemes always end  
in tears, didn't I?

DISPATCHER:

(via radio)

This is Pizza Pope central  
dispatching to the Nightswine.  
Come in Nightswine! Over.

QUENTIN:

This is the Nightswine. Go ahead.  
Over.

DISPATCHER:  
 You boys get back here right away.  
 We've received over ten thousand  
 orders in the last minute!

QUENTIN:  
 On our way.

Quentin throws some toggles on the control panel.

EXT.: SPACE

The Nightswine does a U-turn and flies off.

FADE TO BLACK

FADE FROM BLACK

INT.: THE NIGHTSWINE

Huge stacks of those insulated pizza carriers are piled around the control room. Lagomorph, a thoroughly broken man, wears his Pizza Pope cap atop his helmet in place of his tassel.

LAGOMORPH:  
 Aw, I'll never conquer the universe  
 at this rate! I just don't have  
 what it takes. What's the use?

QUENTIN:  
 There there, old man. Don't take  
 it so hard. Rome wasn't built in a  
 day. You can't expect to just  
 start off with such a large-scale  
 project. Start small and work your  
 way up! I got you something.

LAGOMORPH:  
 (sniffs)  
 What is it?

Quentin hands Lagomorph a gift-wrapped box.

QUENTIN:  
 I picked it up during our last  
 delivery. Open it.

LAGOMORPH:  
 It's not... booby trapped, is it?

QUENTIN:  
(rolls eyes)  
When have I ever booby-trapped  
anything?

LAGOMORPH:  
That's true. You lack a truly  
deviously cunning mind.

Lagomorph opens the package and lifts out a puppy.

LAGOMORPH: (CONT'D)  
What is this creature? It's...  
hideous!

QUENTIN:  
It's a puppy. It's from Earth.  
Humans have kept them and bred them  
for thousands of years. We use  
them as pets. I thought you could  
train him.

LAGOMORPH:  
So, it's a sort of bio-engineered  
slave race?

QUENTIN:  
No! Well, yes, actually. I  
suppose you could say that.

LAGOMORPH:  
Harumph! I have far loftier goals  
than the training of this mongrel.  
I doubt you'll see this animal  
alive again!

Lagomorph stomps to the doorway, carrying the puppy. Quentin  
pulls his hair in exasperation. Lagomorph pauses in the  
doorway, and turns back.

LAGOMORPH: (CONT'D)  
You really think you're good, don't  
you?

Quentin freezes.

LAGOMORPH: (CONT'D)  
Mister Champion of the Oppressed.  
Mister Hero to the Masses. You  
talked a mean game, but when it  
came down to the moment of  
decision, you failed.  
(MORE)

LAGOMORPH: (CONT'D)  
That man, that blue-collar janitor,  
had more courage than you ever  
will. He's dead, because you  
didn't stop yourself from using  
that Tassel. It should have been  
you that jumped out that airlock,  
Quasar. It should have been you.

Quentin's eyes are downcast and his teeth are gritted.

LAGOMORPH: (CONT'D)  
You may scoff at my philosophy, but  
at least I believe in something!

Lagomorph stomps off, carrying the puppy. Quentin looks  
stricken, and doesn't move.

INT.: NIGHTSWINE'S HALLWAY

Lagomorph cackles with evil glee as he walks down the hall.  
He cuddles the puppy experimentally.

LAGOMORPH:  
Well, puppy, that ought to take  
some of the shine off of his  
medals!

INT.: LAGOMORPH'S ROOM

Lagomorph teaches the puppy to play fetch using one of the  
bones taken from his skull-encrusted throne.

INT.: NIGHTSWINE'S CONTROL ROOM

The lights are off. Quentin, lit only by the computer  
monitors and LEDs, slumps in his chair, staring moodily into  
space.

EXT.: SPACE

The Nightswine flies away. A title card appears: "The End."  
The Cosmic Tassel floats into view. A question mark appears  
after the title card: "The End?"